

Kirtland Temple (Mormon)
Kirtland, Ohio.

Lake Co.

HABS No. 22-25

HABS
OHIO
13-KIRT

1-

PHOTOGRAPHS
WRITTEN HISTORICAL AND DESCRIPTIVE DATA
District No. 22

Historic American Buildings Survey
Wm. A. Bohnard, District Officer
9815 Newton Ave., Cleveland, Ohio.

ALBUM
FOLLOWS

ADDRESS:
CHIEF ARCHITECT,
3085 NAVY BLDG.

OHIO
43-KIRT
1-

UNITED STATES
DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
OFFICE OF NATIONAL PARKS,
BUILDINGS, AND RESERVATIONS
BRANCH OF PLANS AND DESIGN
HISTORIC AMERICAN BUILDINGS SURVEY
WASHINGTON

HISTORIC AMERICAN BUILDINGS SURVEY

District No. 22 - Northern Ohio - William A. Rohnard, Director

Project No. 25 - KIRTLAND TEMPLE (MORMON), Kirtland, Lake County, Ohio.

The Temple was built 1833-36 by the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter Day Saints. The present owner is the Reorganized Church of Christ of Latter Day Saints, with its general headquarters at Independence, Missouri.

Organization of Church of Jesus Christ of Latter Day Saints

The following statements are based on the traditions and history of the organization as issued by the Reorganized Church and on histories written by others than members thereof:

Joseph Smith, Jr., of Manchester and Palmyra, New York, was the "First Prophet and Founder" of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter Day Saints.

An angel called on Smith in 1820, to "help in a work which the Lord designed to accomplish" and told him the gospel, perverted during the Dark Ages, would be restored to its original purity and the priesthood could "again be granted to men chosen by God as his ministers".

The angel also told Smith "a record of the Indian progenitors, containing an account of their origin and a history of God's dealings with them, had been written centuries before, and had been hidden away in the earth, but soon could be revealed to him and power given him to translate it and publish it to the world as another witness for Christ".

The record, written on gold plates, was "given to Joseph Smith, and eleven witnesses gave testimony of having seen and handled" the plates in 1827. It is claimed Smith, a man of meager education and little, if any, linguistic attainment, translated the record and published the translation at Palmyra, New York, in 1830, under

**DATA NOT COMPILED AND NOT GUARANTEED
BY LIBRARY OF CONGRESS**

ADDRESS:
CHIEF ARCHITECT,
3065 NAVY BLDG.

OHIO
43-KIRT

UNITED STATES
DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
OFFICE OF NATIONAL PARKS,
BUILDINGS, AND RESERVATIONS
BRANCH OF PLANS AND DESIGN
HISTORIC AMERICAN BUILDINGS SURVEY
WASHINGTON

Page #2.

HISTORIC AMERICAN BUILDINGS SURVEY

District No. 22 - Northern Ohio - William A. Bohmard, Director

Project No. 25 - KIRTLAND TEMPLE (MORMON), Kirtland, Lake County, Ohio.

the title of the "Book of Mormon".

The "Church of Jesus Christ of Latter Day Saints" was organized by Joseph Smith, Jr., and five others in 1830, and, in its first convention held the same year in Fayette, Seneca County, New York, Smith proclaimed he had been visited by angels; had the full powers and responsibilities of a prophet acquired through direct revelations from God; and was the "Mouthpiece of God".

Work at Kirtland

Great activity followed the organization of the Church, opposition was waged by the "Clergy", but "like the saints of old, these people" (the converts) "clung tenaciously to their faith, and the work spread". Four missionaries starting westward in October, 1830, to convert the Indians, stopped at or near Kirtland, where:

They met Sidney Rigdon, a minister of the Disciples Church; converted him to their belief; with him established a church of more than 100 members; were joined by Joseph Smith and 50 families from New York State in 1831; Kirtland became the Church's missionary activities center; and, according to Randall and Ryan, authors of a History of Ohio published in 1912, Joseph Smith, Jr., the evangelist, Sidney Rigdon, the intellectual and Brigham Young, the business and official politician, became the triumvirate which gave early strength and progress to the movement.

Building of the Temple

Joseph Smith, on May 6, 1833, proclaimed a revelation from God directing a Temple should be built and said, as "in ancient days, when the Lord designed a tabernacle or temple should be erected, he spoke to his people, and the Scriptures show that he not only set forth the plan of the building, the length thereof and the breadth thereof, but also the furnishings, the materials, and the very colors to be used", the Lord had given him the plans and designs for it. Work was immediately started and prosecuted as follows:

ADDRESS:
CHIEF ARCHITECT,
3065 NAVY BLDG.

43 KIRK

UNITED STATES
DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
OFFICE OF NATIONAL PARKS.
BUILDINGS, AND RESERVATIONS
BRANCH OF PLANS AND DESIGN
HISTORIC AMERICAN BUILDINGS SURVEY
WASHINGTON

Page #3

HISTORIC AMERICAN BUILDINGS SURVEY

District No. 22 - Northern Ohio - William A. Bohnard, Director

Project No. 25 - KIRTLAND TEMPLE (MORMON), Kirtland, Lake County, Ohio

Joseph Smith was general foreman and foreman of the stone quarry, John Bump the master builder, Sidney Rigdon worked as a mason and Brigham Young as a plasterer, the men members worked as directed sparing "only time enough from their sacred task to earn bread", and the women "spun, wove and practiced every economy."

The corner stone was laid July 24, 1833, and the building was dedicated March 27, 1836.

Dissension - Disaster - Reorganization

Dissension immediately arose among the membership at Kirtland. The management of the Church, the organization of an unchartered bank, a proposed real estate project for the laying out of the City of Kirtland in which it was claimed the leaders of the Church were financially interested, the indictment and conviction of two of the leaders for illegal operation of the bank and the sudden departure of three men from Kirtland brought disaster. Joseph Smith, Jr., Sidney Rigdon and Brigham Young went to Missouri and then to Illinois where unsuccessful attempts were made to build Temples, where their activities met with church and government opposition, and where Smith and his brother Hyrum were arrested for treason and killed by a mob in the Carthage, Illinois, jail June 27, 1844.

Church activities in Ohio and other states practically stopped. Brigham Young and over 100 members went west and established the Mormon Church in Utah, the property at Kirtland passed out of the control of the organization and the Temple fell into serious disrepair.

Steps were taken in 1873 to re-establish the work at Kirtland and to re-acquire the property. Of this William Alexander Linn, in his "The Story of the Mormons" says:

The Temple and two acres of land was deeded by the prophet (Joseph Smith) to Mr. Marks in 1837; in 1841 the Temple and property were re-deeded to Joseph Smith as trustee for the church;

ADDRESS:
CHIEF ARCHITECT,
3065 NAVY BLDG.

OHIO

43 KIRT

UNITED STATES
DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
OFFICE OF NATIONAL PARKS,
BUILDINGS, AND RESERVATIONS
BRANCH OF PLANS AND DESIGN
HISTORIC AMERICAN BUILDINGS SURVEY
WASHINGTON

Page 34.

HISTORIC AMERICAN BUILDINGS SURVEY

District No. 22 - Northern Ohio - William A. Behnard, Director

Project No. 25 - KIRTLAND TEMPLE (MORMON), Kirtland, Lake County, Ohio

in 1862 the property (and Temple) was sold by order of the probate court by Smith's administrator and immediately conveyed to one Russell Huntley, who in 1873 conveyed it to the prophet's grandson, Joseph Smith and another representative of the "Reorganized Church of Jesus Christ of Latter Day Saints", and,

The title of the Reorganized Church was sustained in 1850 by Judge E. S. Sherman, of the Lake County (Ohio) Court of Common Pleas, who held: "The church in Utah has materially and largely departed from the faith, doctrines, laws, ordinances and use of the original Church of Jesus Christ of Latter Day Saints and has incorporated into its system of faith the doctrines of celestial marriage and a plurality of wives and the doctrine of Adam-God Worship contrary to the laws and constitution of the original church and that the Reorganized Church was the true and lawful successor to the original organization."

The property title was cleared, the ownership and name definitely established, the faith, etc., of the original church affirmed, and the doctrine of polygamy legally removed.

Description of Building

The Temple is 59 by 79 feet in size, contains a partly excavated basement, two full stories and an attic. The long axis of the building lies east and west with the front facing east. The exterior walls up to the cornice line are of stone covered, except for the exposed stone foundation, stone quoins at the corners and the stone frieze of the cornice, with stuccoed plaster which contains bits of broken glass, china, etc., collected, according to tradition, by the women of the church, and used to produce a sparkle on the wall surfaces. The gables, dormers and tower are of frame construction. The original roof was covered with handmade wood shingles. The exterior trim around the door and window openings is of stone in long lengths neatly and accurately tooled. The interior framing construction is of hewn and sawed material following the usual heavy construction of that period. The interior trim, stairs, pews, pulpits, doors, etc., are of

ADDRESS:
CHIEF ARCHITECT.
3065 NAVY BLDG.

OHIO

43-KIRT

UNITED STATES
DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
OFFICE OF NATIONAL PARKS,
BUILDINGS, AND RESERVATIONS
BRANCH OF PLANS AND DESIGN
HISTORIC AMERICAN BUILDINGS SURVEY
WASHINGTON

Page #3

HISTORIC AMERICAN BUILDINGS SURVEY

District No. 22 - Northern Ohio - William A. Bohman, Director

Project No. 25 - KIRKLAND TEMPLE (MORMON), Kirtland, Lake County, Ohio.

native woods hand moulded, carved and painted.

The first story is the apostolic floor, the second the church floor, and the attic the school and quorum floor. The first and second stories each contain two groups of nine pulpits, that at the east end being for the Aaronic order and the opposite one for the Melchisedec order. The pulpits are raised in tiers above the main floors. The seating arrangements in these two stories consists of stalls with doors and movable pews in each stall making possible the use of the entire auditorium from either pulpit. The second story auditorium and the school room story were originally used for instruction purposes in connection with preparation for the ministry, priesthood and missionary work.

The workmanship, mouldings, carving, etc., show unusual skill in execution. Many motives are used in the various parts, varying in outline, contour and design, but blended harmoniously. This phase of the work indicates facility in adapting the design to meet varying conditions, as for instance the change in outline of mouldings and in design and size of carving on the spiral stairs. It is not probable that all of the workmen engaged on the building were skilled artisans and yet the result is so harmonious as to raise the question if they may not have been inspired as were the builders of the Cathedrals of old.

The August, 1924, issue of "Architecture" contains an interesting article on the Temple by Thomas E. O'Donnell, A.I.A. of the University of Illinois.

April, 1934.

**DATA NOT COMPILED AND NOT GUARANTEED
BY LIBRARY OF CONGRESS**

Reviewed 1936, H.C.F.

Addendum to
Kirtland Temple (Mormon)
9020 Chillicothe Road
Kirtland Village
Lake County
Ohio

HABS No. OH-22-25

Kirtland
Ohio

43-14187

1-

PHOTOGRAPHS

Historic American Buildings Survey
National Park Service
Department of the Interior
Washington, D.C. 20240